

REMARKS

Prior to a first examination of the continuation patent application filed herewith, please enter the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Applicant has cancelled claims 1-59 without prejudice. Applicant has added claims 60-99. Claims 60-99 remain at issue in the patent application. Applicant believes no new matter has been added.

The application papers filed herewith are a true copy of the prior complete application filed on May 26, 1999 having Application No. 09/320,409. Pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 120 and 37 CFR 1.78(a), this continuation application filed under 37 CFR 1.53(b) is a continuation of Application No. 09/320,409 filed on May 26, 1999 and claims the benefit thereof.

Examination and reconsideration of this case is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

I) DRAWINGS

Applicant has amended FIG. 3H and 6A as shown in pink highlighter in the attached "Request for Approval of Drawing Changes".

Applicant has amended FIG. 3H adding the reference number 322 to the lead line pointing to the cavity 322. Applicant has amended FIG. 6A changing reference number 421 pointing to the fiber ferrules to 422.

Applicant respectfully requests approval of the drawing changes and submits a duplicate of the drawing changes for the draftsman's review.

II) SPECIFICATION

Applicant has amended the specification to correct the reference number designation of "fiber ferrules 421" to --fiber ferrules 422-- in accordance with the drawing changes to avoid duplicate reference number designations.

III) NEW CLAIMS

Applicant has added new claims 60-99. New claims 60, 83 and 94 are independent claims. New claims 61-82 and 84-93, and 95-99 are dependent claims depending directly or indirectly from independent claims 60, 83 and 94, respectfully.

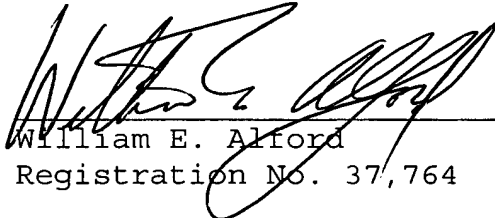
CONCLUSION

A first examination is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and remarks. Allowance of the claims at an early date is solicited.

The examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned counsel by telephone at (714) 557-3800 to expedite the prosecution of this case should there be any unresolved matters remaining. Please charge any shortage in fees in connection with the filing of this paper to Deposit Account 02-2666 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

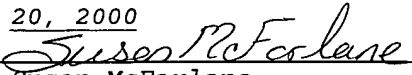
Respectfully submitted
BLAKELY, SOKOLOFF, TAYLOR & ZAFMAN, LLP

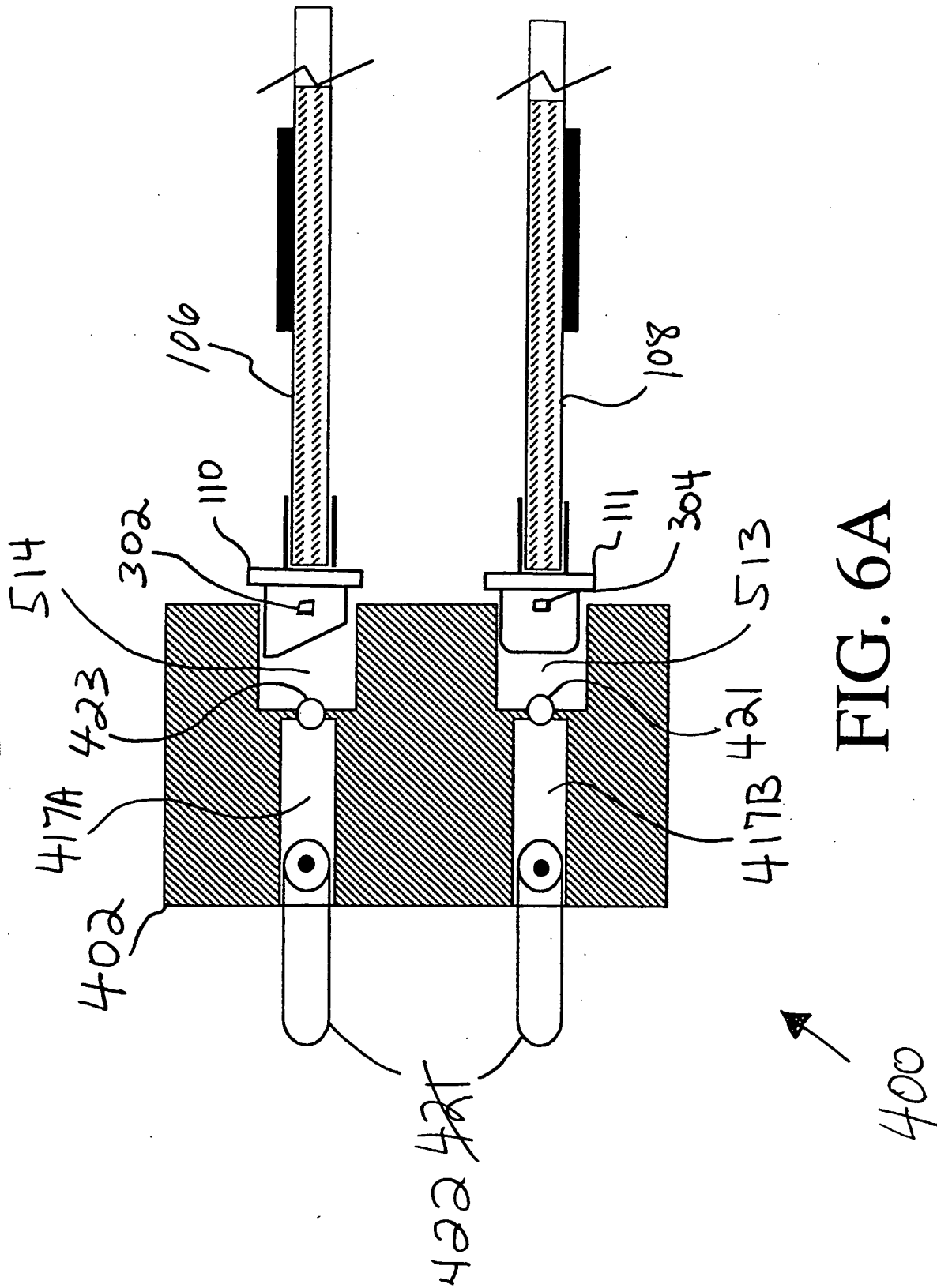
Dated: December 20, 2000


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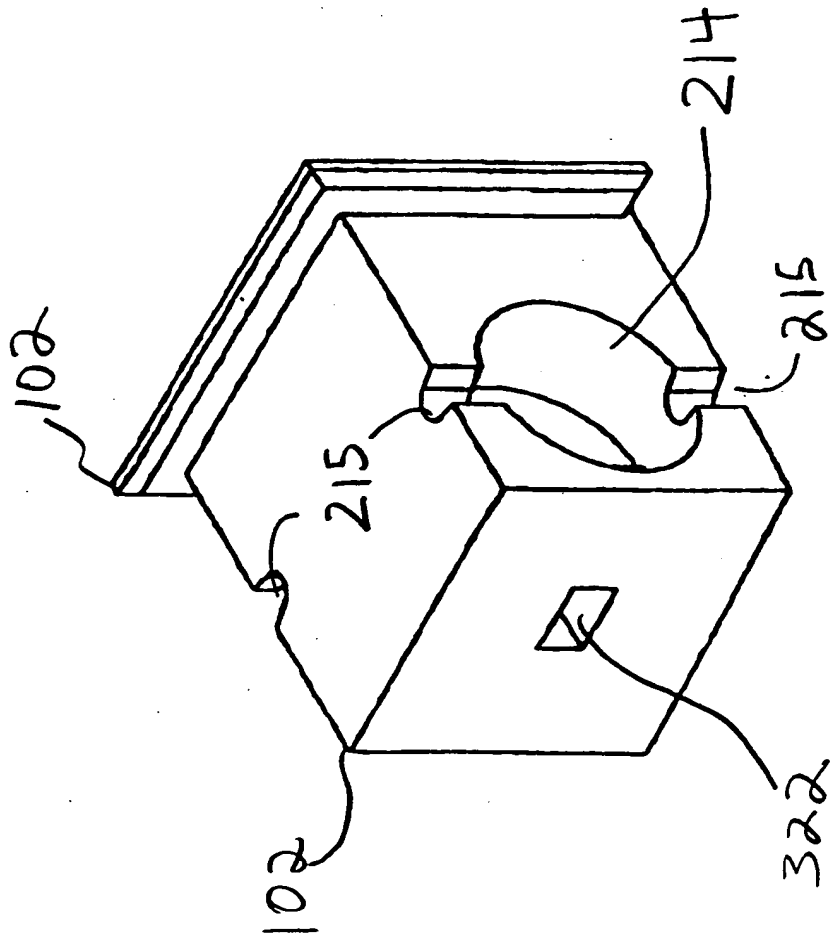


FIG. 3D

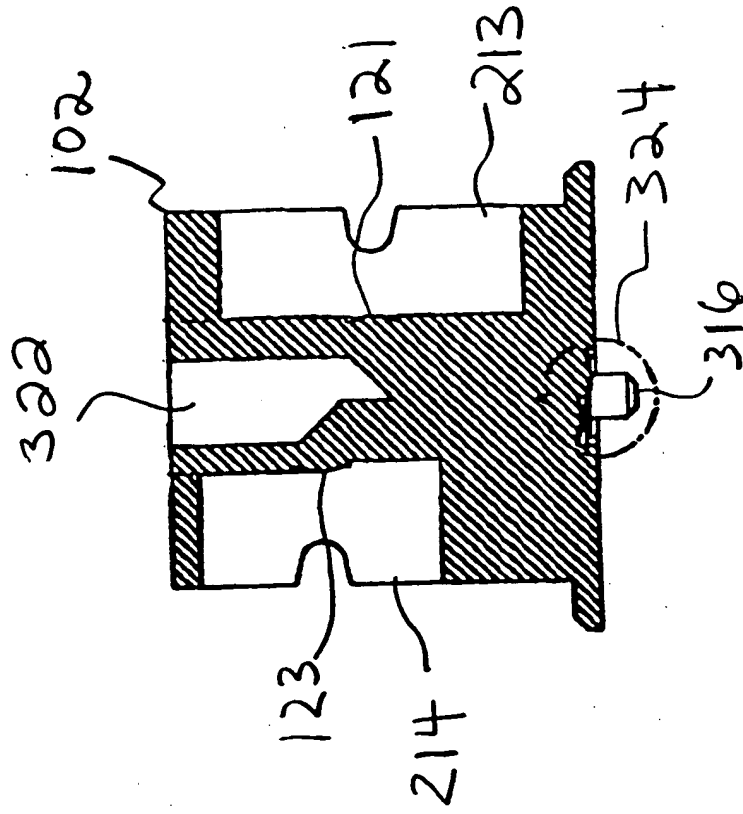


FIG. 3H

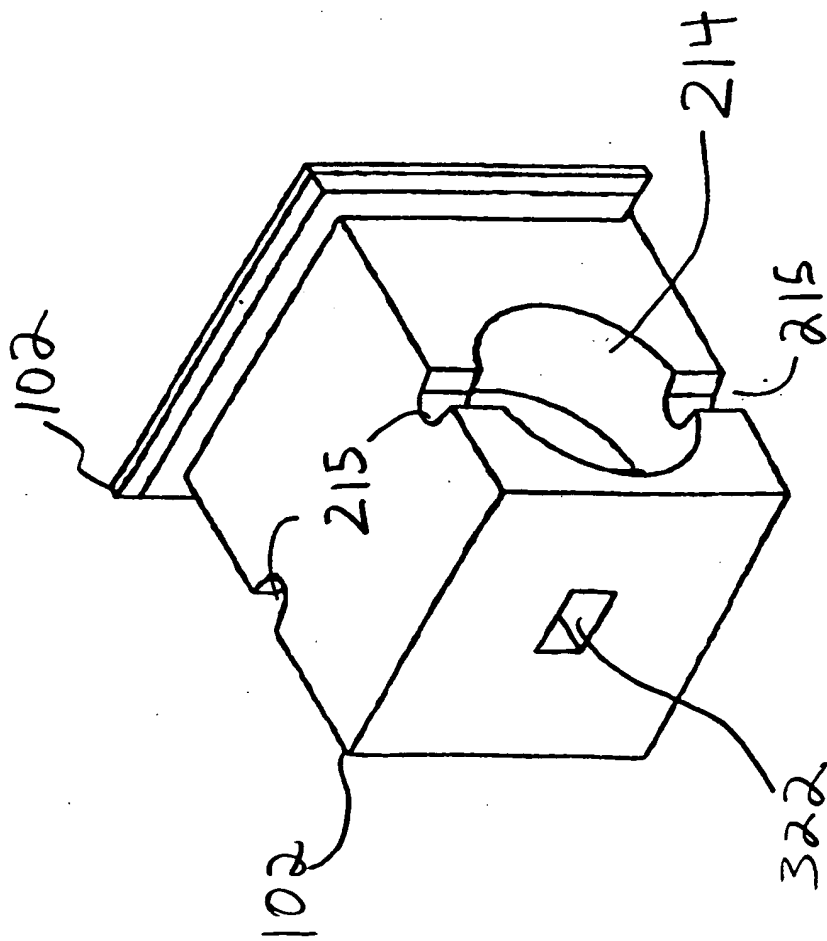


FIG. 3D

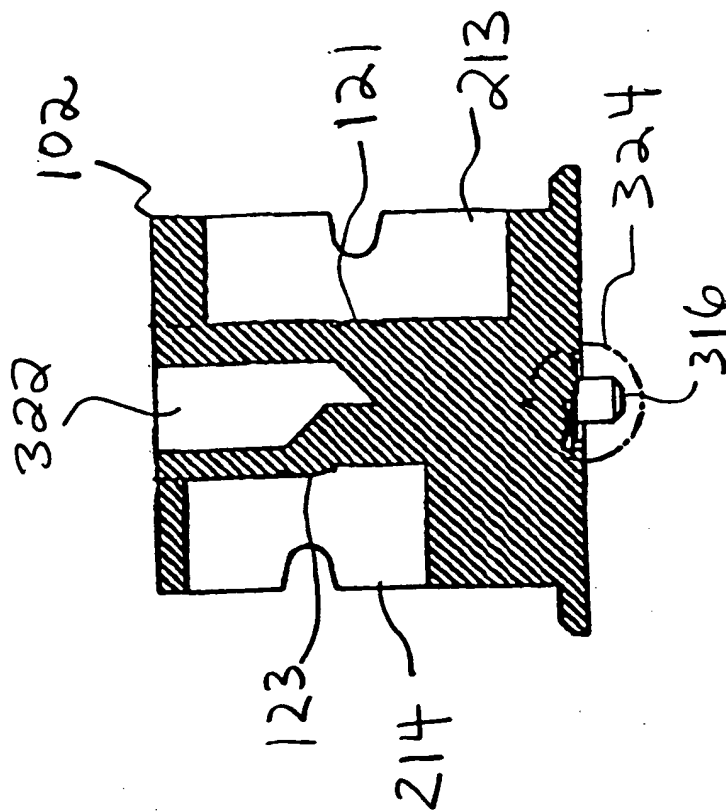


FIG. 3H